The amnesiacs of Oslo (David Gerstman)

Aaron David Miller, a former negotiator during the Oslo process, tweeted **this** as a comment on the Israel elections:

> Bottom line from Israel's April 9 elections — a deeply divided country torn between a real desire for change and the realities of dysfunctional politics; a cruel region and a Prime Minister eager to play to and upon a nation's fears rather than its hopes.

In response, journalist David Gerstman gave Miller **a much needed history lesson** on Twitter:

> In 1993, Israel agreed to accept the PLO as a negotiating partner for peace. The PLO agree to give up terror and negotiate in exchange for no longer being designated as a terrorist organization.
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> Despite a rise in terror, by the end of 1995 Israel had removed its troops from the main Palestinian population areas in the West Bank, putting roughly 90% of Palestinians under the control of the PA, the PLO's successor organization.
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> In early 1996 Israel was struck by a wave of suicide bombings on buses, subsequently, Netanyahu was elected to his first term as PM.
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> After Netanyahu was voted out of office in 1999, his successor Barak met with Arafat in 2000 and offered the PA leader a peace deal. Arafat said no, and two months later started a bloody terror war.
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> In 2000 Israel withdrew all of its troops from Lebanon. The withdrawal was certified as complete by the UN.
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> Hezbollah built up its arsenal and terror infrastructure in southern Lebanon leading to a war in 2006 and remaining a significant threat on Israel's northern border.
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> Israel withdrew its troops and citizens from Gaza in 2005. Subsequently Hamas built up its arsenal and terror infrastructure leading to wars in late 2008, in 2012 and in 2014 and remaining a significant threat on Israel's southern border.
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> Palestinian leaders (Arafat in 2000 and Abbas in 2008 - at least) refused peace deals that would have ended the conflict.
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> Abbas refused to negotiate with Israel and pays terrorists, violating the principles accepted by Arafat.
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> In the first two cases (1996 and 2000) you were part of the team that shaped events. Now you're saying that Netanyahu plays to Israel's fears not hopes.
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> My God, Israel listened to you (and subsequently like-minded individuals) and paid a huge price for it. How dare you dismiss Israeli fears.
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> If Netanyahu resonates with the Israeli electorate, it isn't just that he understands it better than you do. It's also that Israelis see that they can't trust you and people like you to stand up for them when they do what you consider to be the right thing and suffer for it.
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> They see someone like you who demands that Israel makes peace for its own good and legitimacy, but pays little more than lip service to the idea that the Palestinians have any agency to make peace or moral responsibility to do it.
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> So please think long and hard before you mock the Israeli electorate for having fears.

It sometimes feels like there is an amnesia around what happened between Oslo and today, including the terrorism during the 1990s at the same time as the Oslo process.

The idea of Oslo and "two states" is so embedded in people's minds that they casually assume that Israelis who lived through the dark years that were direct consequences of the sunny predictions of peace are irrational, and those criticizing Israel without having the real fear of going on buses or to supermarkets are superior to the Israelis who know the pros and cons better than anyone.

It is worth reminding people that, today, Israel has less terror and the borders are quieter than perhaps at any time in its history. This is not because of the peace process - that only brought death. It is because of a priority placed on security.

Those so willing to bet Israeli lives on their personal attachment to a failed peace process are despicable.